

# UGANDA

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Uganda is at last gaining a positive reputation as being one of Africa's emerging eco-destinations. Entebbe is the capital, and has become a bustling and progressive city, with the main airport close by. The country shares lake Victoria with Kenya and Tanzania, with which it enjoys cordial relations, and it was not always so. A former British colony, it became independent in October, 1962 and after the 'honeymoon period' the tragedy of Idi Amin's reign of terror stained it.

An equatorial country, with high rainfall, volcanic-derived soils and abundant water supplies it has huge agricultural potential, but politics and old methods stunted its agricultural growth.

After Amin's rule the country saw yet more political upheaval, and in recent decades the government has controlled the radicals and allowed better growth and stability. Uganda is now a vibrant and exciting destination!

## GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Uganda is part of the East African alliance, the country is taken up with part of lake Victoria, and lake Albert with the 'Victoria Nile' inbetween them. Although the country is generally equatorial, altitudinal changes affect local regions and the south is far 'wetter' than the north. Most rain falls between March and June, and November/December. The northern border areas experience frequent droughts.

## WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

Uganda has an abundance of wild areas, and some of these were badly abused during the Amin regime, and others were not touched. The jungle conditions did help in preserving large tracts from the depredations of the military, and with subsequent protection and stability these areas have slowly begun to recover.

Uganda is probably best known for the Bwindi and Mgahinga areas where it is possible to trek for Mountain gorillas. However, other parks do offer different experiences.

## BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK

Situated in the south-west of the country on the edge of the Albertine Rift, this was the first park to offer gorilla trekking as a tourist initiative. Fabulous birding is to be enjoyed here and smaller primates too.

## MGAHINGA GORILLA NATIONAL PARK

The smallest park in the country, it abuts the Virunga's of the Congo, and Volcano parks of Rwanda, and is the second gorilla trekking place in Uganda.



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## **MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK**

The Nile river is squeezed through a narrow gorge, creating the falls. This park has very good wildlife, typically elephant, buffalo, hippo, crocodile and a number of antelope species too. It is also where shoebill 'storks' are found.

## **QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK**

Open savanna's, grasslands dotted with trees and giant Euphorbias are typical of this park located on the edge of lake Albert. Giant forest hog, chimpanzees, elephant, lion, antelope, kob, buffalo and abundant bird species make this park special. Boat cruises on the lake enable one to visit the forested areas to see chimpanzees.

## **KIBALE FOREST NATIONAL PARK**

Famous for one of the highest densities of primates in Africa, this lovely park also has more than 1400 wild chimps living within its' boundaries. Trekking for chimps is the main attraction here, apart from red colobus and the rare l'hoesti monkeys.

Two other well-known parks are the Kidepo Valley and Semliki National Parks.

Uganda has a lot to offer travelers now and rafting the Nile and horse safaris have also become favourite past times.



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